

Symphony of Peace Prayers

SOPP2015

IN PICTURES

*Photos from peace gatherings held
around the world, May 16-17, 2015*

celebrating the inauguration of
Igniting the Divine Spark

The **Fuji**
Declaration
For a Thriving World



May Peace Prevail on Earth

SOPP 2015

Celebrating the inauguration of *The Fuji Declaration*



The Fuji Declaration is a universal declaration calling for the rebirth of humanity's sacred spirit and a new civilization in which all life is connected as one. It is an opportunity for us to affirm our true nature and the true purpose of our existence, and to change our course toward a brighter future for all.

The Fuji Declaration was drafted by Dr. Ervin Laszlo, Hiroo Saionji, and Masami Saionji, and was launched with the support of 60 partner organizations and 200 founding signatories, including scientists, artists, statesmen, Nobel Peace Laureates, and other prominent individuals working in various fields. People around the world were invited to sign the declaration online, and in just three months the number of signatories reached 10,000.

“ *The Fuji Declaration is inviting people to think more about how to harmonize and how to recognize...that we're all one in the universal source.* — Alan Briskin, Fuji Declaration founding signatory

The 2015 Symphony of Peace Prayers celebrated the worldwide launch of the Fuji Declaration. An official inauguration ceremony took place on May 17 at Fuji Sanctuary in Japan, and the declaration was also integrated into SOPP ceremonies and peace prayer gatherings held around the world.



For more information, please visit the Fuji Declaration website:
www.fujideclaration.org



The Fuji Declaration

Igniting the Divine Spark for a Thriving World

As individuals responsible for the future of life on Earth, we hereby declare...



Affirming the Light of Consciousness Within All Beings

We affirm the divine spark in the heart and mind of every human being and intend to live by its light in every sphere of our existence.



Commitment to Creating Lasting Peace on Earth

We commit ourselves to fulfilling our shared mission of creating lasting peace on Earth through our ways of living and acting.



Intention to Live and Act on Behalf of all Life

We intend to live and act so as to enhance the quality of life and the well-being of all forms of life on the planet, recognizing that all living things in all their diversity are interconnected and are one.



Freeing the Human Spirit for Deep Creativity

We will continually strive to free the human spirit for deep creativity, and to nurture the transformation necessary to forge a new paradigm in all spheres of human activity, including economics, science, medicine, politics, business, education, religion, the arts, communications and the media.



Mission to Advance a Harmonious Human Civilization

We shall make it our mission to design, communicate and implement a more spiritual and harmonious civilization—a civilization that enables humankind to realize its inherent potential and advance to the next stage of its material, spiritual, and cultural evolution.

Read the full text and sign the declaration online at:

www.fujideclaration.org

FUJI SANCTUARY, JAPAN

The 11th annual SOPP ceremony at Fuji Sanctuary was the venue for the official inauguration of the Fuji Declaration.

Below: Pre-dawn ceremony held to celebrate the launch of the declaration, connecting live with an event at Kronborg Castle in Denmark.



Below: Later in the morning, some 10,000 participants and over 100 guests filled the Prayer Field at Fuji Sanctuary for the main SOPP ceremony.





Above (L to R): Opening on *fujara* by Stanislav Ujhazi; Musical Prelude by Kristin Hoffmann and Kenji Williams. Below (L to R): Introduction to the Fuji Declaration by initiators Masami Saionji, Dr. Ervin Laszlo, and Hiroo Saionji; Tea Ceremony Dedicated to World Peace performed by Dr. Genshitsu Sen, 15th Urasenke Grand Master.



“Through the Fuji Declaration, the heart of SOPP is going out into the world in a new way, shining light out into the world. And I could see the light in the people here.

— The Rev. Canon Dr. Charles P. Gibbs,
Fuji Sanctuary prayer leader

Above: Prayer Leaders Imam Jamal Rahman and The Rev. Canon Dr. Charles P. Gibbs.



Above (L to R): Prayer leaders Hari Ji and Bibi Guru Inder Kaur, Rev. Masfumi Suzuki, and Rabbi Ted Falcon. Below (L to R): Prayer leaders Maulana Syed Muhammad Abdul Khabir Azad, Fr. Dr. James Channan OP, Ms. Shantistree Goswami, Rev. Kocho Sasaki.



“ There are many different occasions when I feel the presence of the ‘divine spark.’ One such occasion is when people of different religions get together with the wish to bring about positive change in the world.

— Fr. Dr. James Channan OP, Fuji Sanctuary prayer leader





Flag ceremony to pray for peace in each country



“

I was so moved by the SOPP, genuinely. It was grace, and it was love made manifest. I felt such celebration in my heart.

— Duane Elgin, Fuji Declaration founding signatory



Inaugurating the Fuji Declaration. (*L to R, from top*): Hiroo Saionji introduces founding signatories on stage; Masami Saionji, Dr. Ervin Laszlo, Mr. Swami Sadyojathah, Dr. Éliane Ubalijoro, Mr. Duane Elgin, and Ms. Barbara Arredondo read the declaration.





Harmony of Sacred Sounds—performances from various spiritual traditions



“ We are not alone anymore. The Fuji Declaration has been launched, and the truth about the divine spark is being sent out to the world... The small drop of water is no longer a drop. It is starting to connect with other drops. Around the world, we are being connected with like-minded people. They are our family, and our noble friends... The Fuji Declaration will not manifest in one or two days. It may take ten, twenty, even a hundred or two hundred years. But the day will come when the next generation sees it and lives it as truth.

— Yuka Saionji, closing remarks

Watch the Fuji Sanctuary
SOPP online:
<http://bit.ly/SOPP2015>



We Are All Shining Divine Sparks

Music by Toshiyuki Watanabe, Lyrics by Masami Saionji



Let's rise above our differences, embracing our diversity

Let us create a future of peace and harmony

We all exist in oneness as part of the universe

Divine spark is in our hearts, shining through you and me

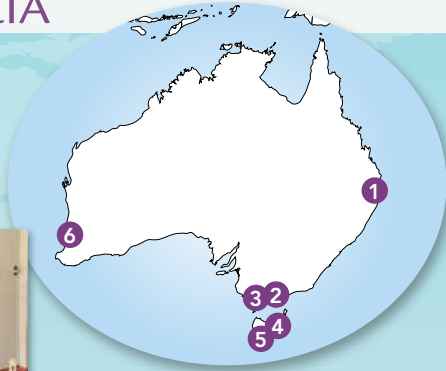


Finale Song, "We Are All Shining Divine Sparks," performed by Tomoko Maekawa with students from Hitoana Elementary School and volunteers.



① BRISBANE, AUSTRALIA

Two people met at a home in Brisbane to read the Fuji Declaration together and to offer prayers for peace in each country, joining with the prayers being sent out around the world.



② MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA

The Heartlight Centre for Conscious living hosted an SOPP ceremony at a home in Eltham, a suburb of Melbourne, with 22 people attending. In a Welcome to Country, a member of the Wiradjuri people acknowledged the traditional landowners of Australia. 22 different faiths and interfaith groups were represented by prayers and ceremonial candles offered on their behalf, and then participants prayed for peace in all the regions of the world. This was followed by a talk on the theme of inner peace, a poetry reading, a performance of peace songs, and a Benediction Dance.



3 GEELONG, AUSTRALIA

At Geelong West Town Hall, more than 60 people took part in an SOPP ceremony. To begin, they honored the traditional custodians of the land and lit the Peace Flame, then held prayers from 13 different spiritual traditions and a prayer for Mother Earth. A dance group performed dances from India, and then participants were introduced to the Fuji Declaration and invited to sign it. All participants took part in a flag ceremony for peace in each nation. The ceremony closed with a talk from the Australian counsel of Thirteen Indigenous Grandmothers, a special prayer of oneness, and a global peace meditation.

Video: <https://youtu.be/3rjvIK0gpUc>



“ It is beautiful to be united in a single cause for world peace.
— Geelong participant

4 BINALONG BAY, AUSTRALIA

Ten people gathered at Moon Whisper in Binalong Bay, where they walked a Pathway of Peace, conducting a series of peace prayer activities along the way. Afterwards, they held a flag ceremony to pray for peace in each country, read the Fuji Declaration together, and closed with a song circle.



5 LITTLE SWANPORT, AUSTRALIA

At the Wind Song retreat centre, nine people gathered to pray for peace in each country with a flag ceremony, which was enhanced by musical performances. In addition, the broadcast from Fuji Sanctuary was shown on a screen at the local market that day.



6 PERTH, AUSTRALIA

The SOPP ceremony in Bicton, a suburb of Perth, included an introduction of the Fuji Declaration, followed by peace prayers from 11 faith traditions and organizations. Several of the faith groups as well as the MC gave musical performances, both before and after the flag ceremony to pray for peace in each country and region.



1 BAGUIO, PHILIPPINES

An SOPP ceremony was held at Villa Romana in Baguio City, organized by the Mandala Peace Arts Initiative. Participants enjoyed a “harmony of sacred sounds” played on a wide variety of instruments, and then addressed the four directions of the Earth, after which prayers for peace were offered by representatives from several different religions and groups. The Fuji Declaration was read aloud, and participants were invited to sign the declaration on a large banner that was made for the ceremony. After more prayers for peace and harmony, the ceremony ended with singing, dancing, and lighting incense.



Philippines





“ Spirituality unites us all, and this, we believe, is a very spiritual event. May this event continue so that peace may truly prevail on Earth. — Baguio organizer

2 MANILA, PHILIPPINES



At the ISIS International Women's House in Quezon City, a group of about ten participants gathered around a table with flag cards and prayed for peace throughout the world.



1 LAHORE, PAKISTAN

The United Religions Initiative Pakistan organized a gathering at the Lahore Peace Center. After an introduction to the SOPP, prayer leaders from three major faiths led prayers for peace, and then two of the guests delivered messages on the topic of peace. A group of students performed a scene showing the devastating effects of terrorism, and the program continued with a poetry reading, a peace song, and the prayer of St. Francis of Assisi. Participants also joined in a flag ceremony to pray for peace in all countries, and sang peace songs together.

Video: <http://youtu.be/5XXyG9K8NhY>



Pakistan



2 RAWALPINDI, PAKISTAN

The SOPP gathering in Rawalpindi, outside Islamabad, was hosted by the Ibteda foundation, with teachers, students, and community members. Participants were introduced to the SOPP and then took part in various prayers for peace and lit candles for peace throughout the world.



3 NADIAD, INDIA

Over 1,000 people took part in SOPP celebrations at Santram Temple in Nadiad. With school children and teachers, they talked about the importance of prayer for peace and spreading peace. With youth, they read verses from a sacred Hindu text. With adult devotees, they recited Sanskrit verses and sang prayers, followed by silent meditation and prayers for peace. In the evening, monks from the Ashram gave talks on world peace and offered prayers together.



BENI, D.R. CONGO

A gathering was organized in Beni by the youth of the Beni Cité Parish, with a delegation from Butembo also present. Participants prayed for peace in the hearts of all the people of the world, and especially in their country and city. They celebrated with a special mass afterwards.



STUPINO, RUSSIA

In Stupino, four adults and two children took part in a gathering outdoors. They held a meditation and prayed for peace in each country using flag cards.



① GDAŃSK, POLAND

In Gdańsk, over a dozen people celebrated the SOPP. They read the Fuji Declaration and talked about its meaning. Then, they offered a prayer for the awakening of humanity and joined in prayers from different faith traditions. They held a peace meditation, and then concluded with a flag ceremony to pray for peace in each nation.

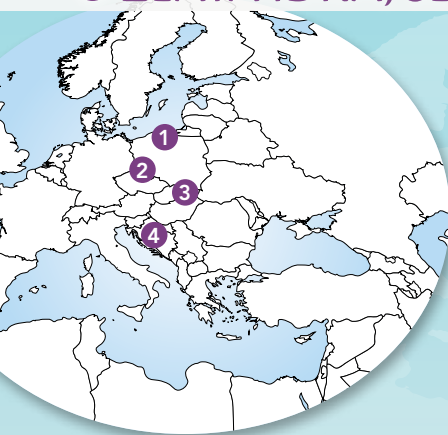


② SZKLARSKA PORĘBA, POLAND

A group of friends gathered in Szklarska Poręba to celebrate the SOPP. They read the Fuji Declaration and discussed its background, then performed prayers for the peace and awakening of all humanity. They also created a large handwritten peace mandala.



3 ZLATÁ IDKA, SLOVAKIA



On Kojšovská hoľa peak, 20 people gathered to pray for peace in connection with all the other SOPP gatherings. Participants were also introduced to the Fuji Declaration and its background.



4 SLOVENIA, CROATIA, & BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

Ms. Lorraine Watts held a week-long SOPP celebration and peace tour through Slovenia, Croatia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina. She conducted peace prayer walks, held a flag ceremony, and created a handwritten peace mandala for each of the three countries.



1 BAD KISSINGEN, GERMANY

11 people celebrated the SOPP in Bad Kissingen. They began by reading the Fuji Declaration, offering prayers for the awakening of all human beings, and meditating on oneness. Then, they prayed for peace in each country using flag cards. They closed the ceremony with singing and dancing and gratitude to everyone taking part in the SOPP, then shared lunch together.



“ It was so beautiful to feel the different energy of each prayer expressing the same wish for peace.

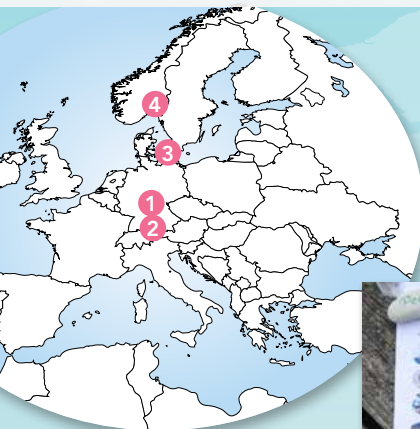
— Bad Kissingen participant

2 MISSEN-WILHAMS, GERMANY

At a home in Missen-Wilhams, people gathered to offer peace prayers from different faith traditions and prayers for peace in each country, connecting with all the people celebrating around the world.



3 FAXE LADEPLADS, DENMARK



At the beach in Faxe Ladeplads, a small group of women read the Fuji Declaration out loud, envisioning their connection with all the gatherings taking place around the world. They expressed gratitude to nature and held a flag ceremony to pray for peace in every country in the world.



4 OSLO, NORWAY

Mr. Waldemar Jozwiak connected online with the ceremony at Fuji Sanctuary, and also offered prayers on his own for peace in all the continents and other regions of the world.



① MONFALCONE, ITALY

In Monfalcone, seven friends gathered at an ancient fort that is now a museum. They read parts of the Fuji Declaration together, and then held a flag ceremony to pray for peace in each country. They closed the ceremony with songs and chants and prayers for Mother Earth.

Video: https://youtu.be/CgZ_8GyYDIM



“ I truly believe that a new planet filled with love, happiness and harmony is possible and is waiting for us to realize it.

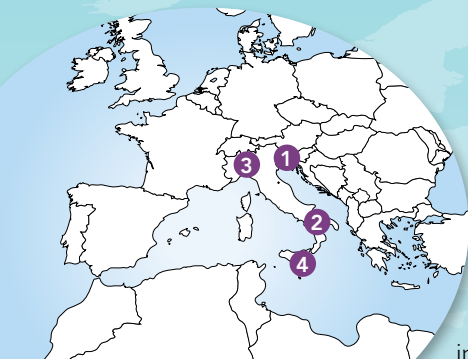
— Monfalcone organizer

② POTENZA, ITALY

People gathered in Potenza to pray for peace in each nation, connecting with the peaceful, loving energy emanating from Fuji Sanctuary and around the world.



3 MILAN, ITALY



13 people attended a gathering at the Gallarate Library in Milan. They created a mandala of flags and formed a circle around it, holding a silent meditation, and sharing prayers, songs, and dances from different cultures and religious traditions. At the end they read and shared the Fuji Declaration.



4 RAGUSA, ITALY

At the Maunacenter in Ragusa, participants read the Fuji Declaration and called for peace in the world. They prayed individually in front of the peace pole, feeling a sense of oneness with all humanity, before concluding with a shared prayer.



① AMSTERDAM, NETHERLANDS

The SOPP ceremony in Amsterdam was held at the Old Lutheran Church. It began with a Shinto prayer and purification. Participants then learned about the Fuji Declaration, which was read aloud accompanied by live music. This was followed by a Buddhist meditation, a flag ceremony to pray for peace in each country, and then two music and dance performances. The ceremony closed with two meditations accompanied by sounds and music, and then a Christian peace ritual. Included in the event was an exhibit of handmade glass objects and *ikebana* flower arrangements.

Video: <https://youtu.be/-DZ6SGqMwgg>

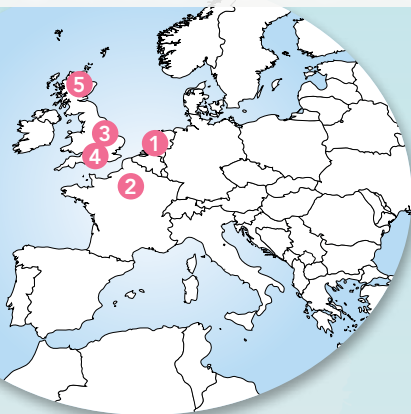


② PARIS, FRANCE

In Paris, two people joined in the ceremony at Fuji Sanctuary, offering prayers for peace in each country in each national language. They read the Fuji Declaration in French and signed it, feeling united with everyone celebrating the launch of the declaration.



③ KIRKBY ON BAIN, LINCOLNSHIRE, UK



17 people celebrated the SOPP at Courtlands in Kirkby-on-Bain. After an opening prayer and meditation, they shared cards with inspirational messages and sang a peace song together. Participants were introduced to the SOPP and the Fuji Declaration, and were invited to sign the declaration. They then held a flag ceremony to pray for peace in each country, closing with a didgeridoo performance and some refreshments.



4 WINCHESTER, UK

Ms. Kyoko Yasuda joined in the live broadcast from Fuji Sanctuary, beginning with the pre-dawn ceremony and continuing with the SOPP ceremony, which took place in the middle of the night in the UK. Afterward, she continued on her own, re-reading the Fuji Declaration and holding her own small flag ceremony.



5 FINDHORN, SCOTLAND, UK

At the Findhorn Community in Scotland, about 60 people took part in an SOPP ceremony. They connected with all the events taking place around the world, and then honored the world's major religions and spiritual traditions, lighting candles for each, and performed songs and dances from different traditions. Later, in a different location, they held a flag ceremony in a garden, praying for all the continents and countries, and then read the Fuji Declaration aloud.



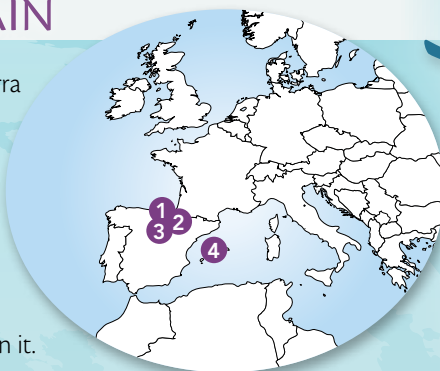
“ Since the event, the question ‘What more can I do to help realize peace in the world and in all hearts?’ feels more alive in me.

— Findhorn participant

1 ARTZENTALES, SPAIN

An SOPP ceremony was held at the Amalurra Community's center in Artzentales, near Bilbao, with more than 50 people. The founder of the Amalurra project was abroad and gave a welcome address via Skype. Then, participants were introduced to the SOPP and the Fuji Declaration. They read the declaration and were invited to sign it. Representatives from different religious and spiritual groups offered prayers, guided meditations, talks, and dances in connection with the Fuji Declaration. After this, participants joined in a flag ceremony to pray for peace in each country, and closed in a circle with singing and dancing.

Video: https://youtu.be/qld2_917TJ4



Spain



2 OLAZTI, SPAIN

Five people met at a house in Olazti for a peace gathering. The room was decorated with a large mandala and a world map, which was illuminated by the sun coming in the window.



3 URREZ, SPAIN

In Urrez, a village in Burgos, a group of people carried flags representing the different continents outside the village to a gathering place in the woods. Along the way they paused for dances, prayers, and reflective silence. At their destination, they held a flag ceremony to pray for peace in each country and region, finishing with more dances and songs.





4 PALMA DE MALLORCA, SPAIN

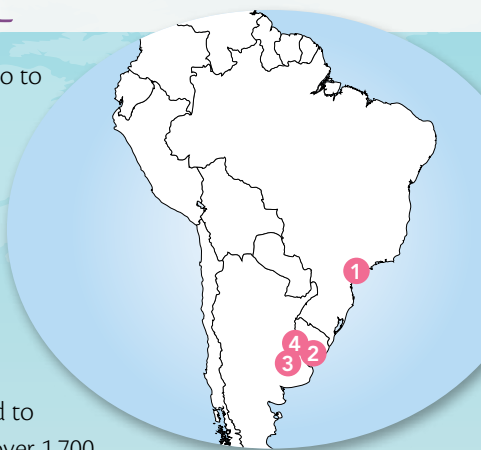
Eight people gathered at a spot in the Bellver forest outside Palma de Mallorca. They prayed for peace in each country, passing flag cards from hand to hand and forming a square mandala of flags. They offered prayers for peace and sang songs together.



“ *The world is beautiful, we are beautiful, and our heart connected to the rest of the living world is the best tool to overcome our fears and divisions.* — Mallorca organizer

① SÃO PAULO, BRAZIL

Two large-scale events were held in São Paulo to celebrate the SOPP and the Fuji Declaration. On May 16, about 200 people gathered at Fraternidade Pax Universal, offering songs, prayers, and messages from various faiths and spiritual traditions. On May 17, some 5,000 people attended the gathering at the Perseverança Spiritual Center, where they again celebrated with messages and songs. At both events participants were introduced to the Fuji Declaration and invited to sign it—over 1,700 signatures were collected in all.



Videos: May 16: <http://bit.ly/1lrsbxB>; May 17: <https://youtu.be/m7a7QzAYMSU>



2 MONTEVIDEO, URUGUAY

On May 23, about 100 people took part in an SOPP gathering in Montevideo. They began with a meditative dance, and then were introduced to the Fuji Declaration and invited to sign it. Representatives from 12 organizations spoke about their support for the declaration, and then all joined in a flag ceremony to pray for peace in each country, ending with a celebratory dance.

Video: <https://youtu.be/zAt97YhiSWU>

Uruguay



“ The feeling of unity in diversity certainly was created at this moment. Everyone present said they felt a strong desire in their heart to be part of the creation of this new world.

— Uruguay organizer

3 LA REJA AND MORENO, ARGENTINA

About 200 people took part in an SOPP ceremony in La Reja, just outside Buenos Aires. They watched the pre-dawn ceremony at Fuji Sanctuary, and then representatives from 16 organizations each spoke about their support for the Fuji Declaration. They held a flag ceremony to pray for peace in each country. The following day, the organizers led a flag ceremony to open the annual Moreno Zen gathering in nearby Moreno city.

Video: <http://youtu.be/yuurrxAdKg>



“ It was very moving to hear the representatives from the various organizations explain why they were signing the Fuji Declaration. Each word they spoke created the world which we all aspire to build. — La Reja organizer





4 LOS POLVORINES, ARGENTINA

In Los Polvorines, outside Buenos Aires, 24 participants celebrated the SOPP and the launch of the Fuji Declaration. They read the full declaration, then held a meditation and a flag ceremony to pray for peace in all the nations and regions of the world, closing the gathering with a song and a shared meal.



MEXICO CITY, MEXICO

Two SOPP events were held in Mexico City. The first, at the Brahma Kumaris Centre, was called "Being in Harmony with the World." The 20 participants listened to a talk about manifesting peace, then held a group meditation, which included listening to the Fuji Declaration.



On the same day, 21 participants took part in a special event at the ExpoSer health and well-being trade show. A Náhuatl group opened with a performance on musical bowls, and then the public were invited to join in a meditation to send peace to the elements. They sang a Náhuatl peace song, created a circle with the flags of the world, and held a peace meditation. At the end, participants were invited to learn about the Fuji Declaration.



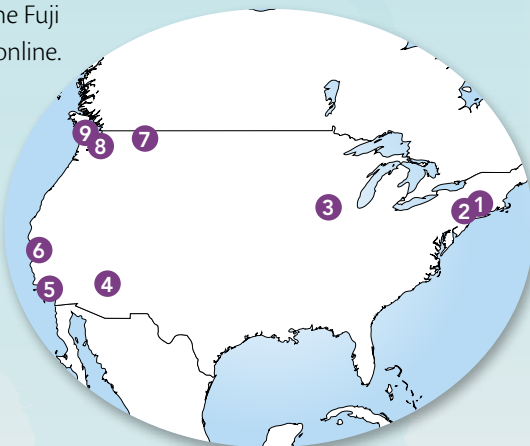
1 CORNWALL, CONNECTICUT, USA

At the gathering in Cornwall, participants read the Fuji Declaration and held a flag ceremony to pray for peace in each country on earth, connecting with all the gatherings taking place around the world.



2 CROTON FALLS, NY, USA

The Chapel at Croton Falls celebrated its fifth SOPP, which began with a Universal Worship Service and continued with prayers for peace from various world religions. Participants were introduced to the Fuji Declaration and invited to sign it online. Then, they all took part in a ceremony to pray for peace in each country, forming a mandala of flags around the peace pole, and accompanied by live singing.



3 IOWA CITY, IOWA, USA

An SOPP gathering was held at the Iowa City Public Library. Participants prayed for peace in each country while presenting the national flags, with special prayers for Nepal and the United States. They sang peace songs and received a copy of the Fuji Declaration. A peace pole was presented to the director of Peace Iowa.



“ I felt...tears of joy in knowing that our prayers for peace would reach each person in each country, and help them strengthen the divine spark that lives in each of their hearts!

— Iowa City participant

4 PAYSON, ARIZONA, USA

28 people attended the first SOPP in Payson, at the United Methodist Church. Prayers were shared by representatives from three faith traditions, and then participants joined in a flag ceremony to pray for peace in each country. They closed with a song circle.



5 GARDENA, CALIFORNIA, USA

At the Byakko Los Angeles Dojo in Gardena, a group of people gathered to watch the live broadcast from Fuji Sanctuary, joining in both the pre-dawn ceremony and the SOPP ceremony.



6 CASTRO VALLEY, CALIFORNIA, USA

At the Lake Chabot Marina Park in Castro Valley, some 30 people joined in an SOPP ceremony. They began with prayers from five different religious and spiritual traditions, and continued with prayers for peace in each country using flag cards, accompanied by live piano music. After a silent meditation, participants were introduced to the Fuji Declaration and invited to sign it. The gathering closed with a drum circle and some refreshments.



7 SANDPOINT, IDAHO, USA

At Cynthia's Preschool and Kindergarten in Sandpoint, 13 children and two adults celebrated the SOPP. They talked about the power of words and prayed for peace throughout the world. They sang peace songs, drew pictures about what peace means to them, and read a book about peace together.



“ I think I speak for us all when I say that a calming, loving energy surrounded us as we shared these thoughts and prayers for peace. — Sandpoint organizer

8 SEATTLE, WASHINGTON, USA

The Interfaith Community Sanctuary in Seattle celebrated the SOPP during its Sunday service. All participants joined a procession of the flags of the world, while singing “May Peace Prevail on Earth.” Then, they held prayers and readings from various faith traditions.



9 VICTORIA, BC, CANADA

In Victoria, about 30 participants gathered outdoors around a peace pole to sing songs, dance, and offer prayers for peace.



Canada

With gratitude...

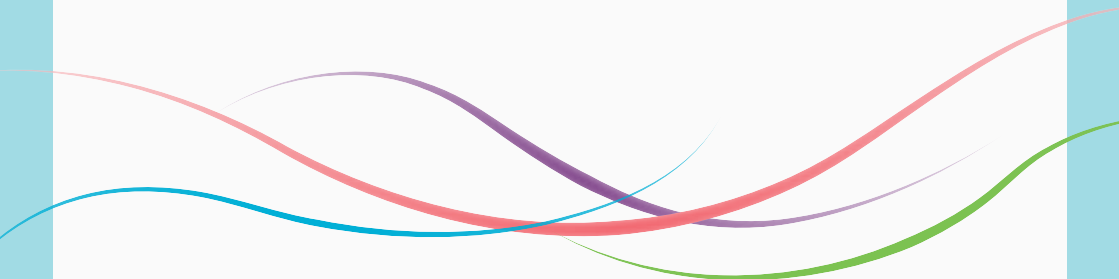
to every individual in every part of the world who participated in the 2015 Symphony of Peace Prayers and the inauguration of the Fuji Declaration. We would especially like to recognize the peace gatherings held at the following locations, for which photos were not available:

- 🌀 Perth (Edgewater), Australia
- 🌀 Nice, France
- 🌀 Velizy, France
- 🌀 Bad Wildungen, Germany
- 🌀 Berlin, Germany
- 🌀 Kiryat Ono, Israel
- 🌀 Girona, Spain
- 🌀 Chicago, United States

The Symphony of Peace Prayers

is an inter-religious, inter-spiritual annual peace prayer event, first held in 2005 at Fuji Sanctuary in Japan. At the core of this event is its unique prayer ceremony, in which representatives from various world faiths and spiritual traditions lead participants in prayers for peace. Since 2008, the SOPP has been a worldwide event, with ceremonies and prayer gatherings held annually in locations around the world. In 2013, an SOPP ceremony was held at the United Nations in New York, and in 2015, the SOPP was the venue for the inauguration of the Fuji Declaration.

www.symphonyofpeaceprayers.com



Symphony of Peace Prayers · Byakko Shinko Kai

Fuji Sanctuary | 812-1 Hitoana
Fujinomiya, Shizuoka | 418-0102 | Japan
Tel: +81 (0)544-29-5120 / 5100 | Fax: +81 (0)544-29-5121